Answered Sept. 18. 1838

[illegible] College Aug. 17th 1838.

Mr. Wm. Hunting

Dear Sir

Your letter of Sept. 20th 1837 together with a copy of the constitution of your society, were duly received. [illegible] has been delayed till the present [illegible] on account of the ill- dea[illegible] (~~[illegible] secretary~~) & the pressure of other [illegible] however, (as is generally the case) [illegible] found me much better prepared [illegible] these respects. I have therefore thought best to address a few lines to yourself, which you can ~~read or not~~ do your pleasure about reading before your society.

As you are a graduate of Amherst Coll., it cannot of course be necessary for me to enter into details of what transpired before you left. Our Society of Inquiry must have been organized (I think) while you was here, or before you entered. You of course know as much as or more than myself, of its early history. It is probably more flourishing now than when you left. The present number of members is about 60 or 70. We have 9 committees on the different subjects of Inquiry, 3 of which report each term. We hold our regular meetings on Friday evening every other week. The meetings are generally well attended.

The degree of missionary feeling in the College at the present time, it seems, very small. There are probably not more than 11 or 12 who are fully determined to become missionaries to the heathen. There are others who feel ~~deeply~~ interested in the subject, and are inquiring for the path of duty. The monthly concert is well attended & interesting. The Professors—certainly 3 or 4 of them—are prominently much engaged in the cause, & well acquainted with the designs & operations of the Missionary Board C.F.M. The proportion of hopefully pious students in College is from one half to two thirds of the whole number. "How many have the ministry in view," I cannot tell exactly. Certainly a large majority of the professors of religion.

That but very few of us have adequate notions of the high & holy calling at which we aim, is painfully evident. "At ease in Zion" expresses more correctly than anything else, the apparent condition of many. Yet there are some amongst us who manifest a concern for the glory of God & the welfare of souls. On the whole, the religious influence in College is probably about the same as it has been for several years past. There has been one very happy case of Conversion in the Senior Class within the last six months. He was consecrated to the ministry from his birth—has often been the subject of serious impressions. He is now "rejoicing in hope," & appears to be "rooted & grounded in love."

There are very interesting revivals in several of the neighboring towns— particularly in Williamsburg, South Hadley, & Gill. At the first mentioned place, the work has been progressing for some months. The number of hopeful conversions is about 150. At South Hadley the work is apparently increasing. In Whately & Conway there are tokens of God's special presence & favor. A deep seriousness appears to pervade the whole town of Conway, much the same as at Williamsburg in the beginning of the revival there.

These facts are in a high degree encouraging in ~~the~~ a time of such general declension.

I have always regarded theological students at a great remove from students in College. And although now as it were on the very threshhold of a theological seminary myself, I cannot entirely divest myself of this feeling. I shall never forget the impression left upon my mind the first time I attended the anniversary at Andover. It was that the students had acquired such an elevation & firmness of character as to be uninfluenced by the common temptations of life. I have now ascertained that "there is no wall of fire about a theological seminary to keep out unholy passions" — & that students of theology as well as others have need to "suffer the word of exhortation." That word shall be on this occasion, in the language of St Paul: "Be perfect — be of one mind — live in peace."

AMHERST
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Mr. Wm. Hunting
Cor. Secy Soc. Inquiry
Princeton Seminary

On behalf of the Society of Inquiry in
Amherst College,
[illegible] Corresponding Sec.